

PROCEEDINGS

of the conference on

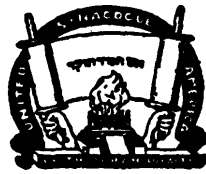
Jewish Music In The Synagogue

held under the auspices of

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

of

THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF AMERICA



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH, 1947

at

THE JEWISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF AMERICA

Broadway and 122nd Street, New York City

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
GREETINGS	3
ADDRESS	4
“The Department of Music-Its Aims and Purposes” Cantor David J. Putterman	
ADDRESS	6
“The Cantor’s Functions in Synagogue and Community” Rabbi David A. Goldstein	
ADDRESS	7
“Standards and Qualifications for the Cantor” Cantor Gershon Ephros	
ADDRESS	7
“The Importance of the Cantillations” Prof. Salomo Rosowsky	
“What are the Musical Needs of the Conservative Synagogue?”	
A. Excerpts of address delivered by Dr. Tra Eisenstein.	8
B. Excerpts of address delivered by Dr. Isadore Freed.....	8
“Where and How Shall a Cantor be Trained?”	
A. Excerpts of address by Rabbi Israel Goldfarb	9
B. Excerpts of address delivered by Cantor Max Wohlberg.....	10
ADDRESS	11
“The Cantor’s Place in Jewish Musical Research” Joseph Yasser	
ADDRESS	11
“The Cantor as a Leader in Jewish Musical Progress” Max Helfman	
“Tenure and Economic Security of the Cantor”	
A. Excerpts of address delivered by Israel B. Oseas.....	12
B. Excerpts of address delivered by Lawrence M. Helfgott	13
RESOLUTIONS	14
ATTENDEES	15

PROCEEDINGS
OF
The Conference on
Jewish Music in the Synagogue

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH, 1947

The all-day Conference on "Jewish Music in the Synagogue," held under the auspices of the Department of Music of the United Synagogue of America, in the Unterberg Auditorium of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 3080 Broadway, New York City, was attended by 168 representatives of congregational and other groups and organizations throughout the United States and Canada. Of these, 87 represented congregations directly affiliated with the United

Synagogue of America. Included in the remaining group of 81, were representatives of cantorial associations and others interested in the development of Jewish Music in the Synagogue. A goodly number of the latter group came from congregations which, though not directly affiliated with the United Synagogue of America, nevertheless regard themselves as Conservative congregations.

GREETINGS

The morning session began at 10 :30 A.M. with Rabbi Albert I. Gordon, Executive Director of the United Synagogue of America, presiding. After extending a word of welcome to those assembled and calling attention to the fact that so large a representation from congregations and other groups throughout the country indicated a deep interest in the development of Jewish music and its standards, Rabbi Gordon expressed the hope that the United Synagogue would be able to provide the necessary guidance and leadership which would improve the musical standards of the Synagogue.

Greetings were delivered by Mr. Samuel Rothstein, President of the United Synagogue of America, on behalf of the sponsoring body. He expressed enthusiastic delight at the splendid response to the calling of

this Conference, and assured the assembled delegates that the United Synagogue, which is vitally concerned with meeting the needs of the 400 Conservative congregations which are affiliated with it, would do everything in its power to provide leadership in the field of Jewish Music in the Synagogue.

Dr. Louis Finkelstein, President of the Jewish Theological Seminary, extended his greetings and indicated the important role that traditional Jewish music had played in his life, expressing the hope that the traditional values would not be lost to the generation to come.

The invocation was delivered by Rabbi Ario S. Hyams of Temple Beth El, Asbury Park, New Jersey.

OPENING ADDRESS

"THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC- ITS AIMS AND PURPOSES"

by **CANTOR DAVID J. PUTTER-MAN**

Director, Department of Music, United Synagogue of America

Cantor, Park Avenue Synagogue, New York City

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם • שרתנו וקמנו
והגיענו לימן הזה :

"When Rabbi Gordon invited me to become the Director of this newly created Department of Music, there were two specific reasons which motivated my acceptance;-first the opportunity to serve a cause which has become my life's most cherished ideal, namely to be of service to my profession, and secondly the obligation to endeavor to solve the problems which confront us. I am genuinely cognizant of this challenge and clearly realize that this is not a one-man job. Many of the suggestions that I shall set forth are by no means new or original. Several committees of the various departments of the United Synagogue of America are already functioning to correct the music deficiencies in their respective agencies. I offer each of them our earnest desire to cooperate with them at all times and invite and solicit their assistance, as well as the support of each and everyone of you present today at this all important conference.

"The aims and purposes of this Department of Music are to be able to eventually serve all of our musical needs and to be of assistance to all who may seek our advice and guidance. The following program which I submit for your consideration, is divided into two categories : first "The Long-range Prospectus" and second, "The Program of Our Immediate Needs."

The Long-range Prospectus :

1. Music Library. To develop and enlarge the Jewish music library now housed at the **Jewish** Theological Seminary of America.

2. Record Library: To create a library of Jewish recordings which shall contain all available records and which shall make every effort to reproduce copies of old recordings now out of print. Thus we shall retain for posterity a veritable treasure of Jewish music which is in danger of becoming extinct.

3. Research and Musicology: To foster, encourage and support the establishment of a Chair in Jewish Musicology and Research at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

4. Radio, Recordings and Movies: To offer our assistance, in an advisory capacity, to radio stations, recording firms and movie companies. To encourage them to produce more abundantly in the field of Jewish musical interest and to strive towards higher musical standards. To aid them to stimulate public interest in radio programs, recordings and movies that are of Jewish musical content.

5. Religious Musical Needs:

a) To encourage new musical creativity for composers to compose new services as companions to our new Sabbath and Festival Prayer Book. To create new uniform hymnals in an effort to standardize Congregational singing and new musical services for Junior Congregations.

b) To revitalize Jewish religious ceremonies with appropriate Jewish music. Chopin's Funeral March and the Wedding March from Lohengrin by Wagner are not Jewish music-nor are the so-called popular secular vocal solos now sung at Jewish weddings.

We should commission Ernest Bloch, the foremost Jewish composer of our time, to compose music for these sacred occasions. By enlisting the cooperation of all of our religious leaders-Bloch's Wedding March could become the fashionable and accepted Jewish wedding processional.

6. Educational Musical Needs: To prepare, for schools and youth groups, program aids, guides and curricula for music teachers, materials for recordings, music test books, songsters, etc.

7. Publications : To encourage music publishers to publish more Jewish music and to assist them in stimulating greater public interest in these publications. Whenever feasible, the United Synagogue of America should publish under its auspices, musical services, hymnals, songsters, music bibliographies, pamphlets, etc.

8. Musical Standards : An over-all committee should be organized which shall be comprised of representatives from all of the affiliated groups of the United Synagogue of America to establish **musical** standards for all of the aforementioned projects. No group ought to assume autonomous responsibility. We must strive at all times to retain the best elements of our traditional heritage and to adapt these musical traditions to conform to a new and everchanging scene. Everything which bears our stamp of approval must conform to high artistic standards.

The Program for Our Immediate **Needs:**

1. Registry and Placement: To enlarge our present registry for Cantors to include choir leaders, music directors, organists, singers, music teachers, etc., and to assist in the placement of qualified personnel.

2. Student Cantors: To guide and advise those who are desirous of becoming Cantors.

3. The Cantor:

a) Standards and Qualifications : It is imperative that we dissuade Cantors from advertising themselves by any medium, especially through the daily press. No Cantor, who is genuinely devoted to his calling, should commercialize Jewish sacred religious functions. No Cantor, who is a truly devoted Shaliach Tzibur, should desert the Synagogue to perform as a religious functionary elsewhere for financial gain. Cantors must refrain from any practices which are undignified and contrary to the noblest ethics of our profession. A Committee on Standards and Qualifications for the Cantor, should be established, whose function it shall be to institute criteria of standards for the Cantor, and upon the Cantor's compliance with all of these requirements, the Cantor shall be honored with a "Certificate of Merit."

b) The Cantor's Assembly: To organize a Cantor's Assembly of America, comparable to the Rabbinical Assembly of America, for the purpose of having a national organization for Cantors serving Conservative Synagogues. This assembly shall be dedicated to

conserve and promote the best of our traditional musical heritage of the Synagogue, to encourage new creativity, to cooperate with The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, the Rabbinical Assembly of America, the United Synagogue of America and with all of the existing Cantor's Organizations. To advance the cause of Jewish music, to promote the welfare of its members and to foster the spirit of fellowship and cooperation among its members.

c) The Cantor's Functions : The Cantor should be ready and willing to cooperate with and assist the Rabbi at all times. In addition to conducting services, he should encourage and train the Congregation to participate in congregational singing. He should be capable of training the choir, teach Jewish music in the Synagogue's religious schools, organize choral groups, and be prepared, if necessary, to teach Bar Mitzvah boys and Bas Mitzvah girls or Confirmants. He should seek appointments to Synagogue and school committees, wherever he may be of service. He should endeavor to serve the Synagogue in whatever capacity he is qualified.

d) Tenure and Economic **Security:** To urge Synagogues to engage Cantors on a permanent basis. To pay its cantor a salary commensurate with his talents and with decent living standards which will afford the Cantor and his family the means to live in security and comfort. To urge Synagogues and Cantors to avail themselves of the retirement plan which will be offered to them by the Joint Retirement Board.

e) A **Cantor's Conservatory:** In the few weeks since I have assumed my present post, thirteen Synagogues have applied to us for the services of qualified Cantors. Of all of the available Cantor applicants whom I have interviewed, there are possibly three or four who might qualify to fill these positions. This condition is becoming progressively worse. A committee consisting of Rabbis, Cantors, lay persons and musicians must be formed, which shall be empowered by this Conference, to exert every conceivable means at its disposal to expedite the establishment of a Conservatory for Cantors in the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Since such a project is already included in the Seminary's proposed program for a University of Judaism, its realization is virtually assured. **We** should give our wholehearted support to this most important project and urge its immediate adoption.

"These then are the aims and purposes of the Department of Music of the United Synagogue of America.

To be sure this is an ambitious program, but essential in every aspect and one which is within the realm of realization. To this end we pray.

אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו היה עם פיפיות שלוחי עמך
בית ישראל

"Our God and God of our fathers, inspire the lips

of those who have been appointed by Thy people, the house of Israel" -to be worthy of fulfilling the song of the Psalmist

עבדו את " בשמחה באו לפניו ברננה

"May we ever serve the Lord with gladness; and come before His presence with singing."

"THE CANTORS FUNCTIONS IN SYNAGOGUE AND COMMUNITY"

Excerpts of address delivered by

RABBI DAVID A. GOLDSTEIN

Har Zion Temple, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

"The fact that we are considering the cantors' functions today, confirms the fact that great changes have taken place in Jewish life. A generation ago, there would have been no need to discuss this subject for everyone knew what a Chazan was for and what he was expected to do. The same was true with respect to the Rabbi. Yet, just as the functions of the Rabbi have changed in certain degrees, so changes have occurred with respect to the Cantor.

"The Rabbi should still be primarily, the instrument for the transmission and creative development of Judaism. He remains above all, scholar, teacher and preacher. So it is with the Cantor. The two words that best describe the Cantor's role are Shaliach Tzibur. He is the person delegated by the congregation to lead them in prayer. The prayers he chants are not his original compositions. They are the accumulated treasure of Israel. By the manner in which he recites them, he helps to give life and meaning to them. Even the music which he sings is largely fixed by tradition, although he may contribute of his own, providing no violence is done to that which is traditional.

"The first test, then, of a Cantor's effectiveness is - to what extent he has helped the congregation to achieve a prayerful mood and find comfort, courage and strength in prayer. How far has he helped the congregation to realize that it is in the presence of God?

"In this connection, in some congregations, the reform which requires the Cantor to face the congrega-

tion is an innovation that is harmful. Psychologically, the Cantor ceases to be a 'Shaliach Tzibur', facing God and praying to Him and becomes a performer facing a congregation of human beings and trying to win their favor . . .

"While the Cantor's work as 'Shaliach Tzibur' is most important, that is not enough. The Cantor, possessed of knowledge and piety, should also be a scholar and teacher. He should be the authority on Susach and Jewish music in the congregation, just as the Rabbi is the authority on general Jewish scholarship and law. He should use his knowledge to teach young and old. Perhaps Bar Mitzvah, which has to do with the chanting of the prayers, should be one of his foremost interests. Young people who are gifted should be trained to be able to conduct services before the congregation. Those with talent should be encouraged to think of becoming Cantors. The Cantor should, in every way, seek to secure maximal participation in the service and otherwise on the part of the congregation. When there is such participation, there is greater appreciation of the professionat . . .

"If possible, the Cantor should foster creative talents in Jewish music. He should **give** his full time to the congregation and devote himself to the field of liturgy and music. He should be recognized as a minister of the Congregation and compensated accordingly. A Cantor should, above all, be a co-worker with the Rabbi in the vineyard of the Lord."

“STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE CANTOR”

Excerpts of address delivered by

**CANTOR GERSHON EPHROS, Composer-Cantor
Congregation Beth Mordecai, Perth Amboy, New Jersey**

“The musical standard of a people can be measured by the degree of love, respect and reverence which that people feels for its religious music. The attitude of the Jewish people is reflected in our daily prayers in which we even attribute love and reverence for religious music to God Himself, whom we characterize in our morning liturgy as ‘Who makest choice of song and Psalm’ . . .

“The Chazan should be acquainted with the musical literature of the synagogue from Rossi to the latest of our contemporary composers. He should also be versed in our modern secular Jewish music, our folk and

Palestinian songs. He should know the history of Chazanut and the history of our liturgy. He should be able to read in the Torah and blow the Shofar. Playing a musical instrument moderately well is essential in order to be able to train and conduct a choir. He should also be acquainted with the various songs of our Hebrew and Sunday Schools, so that he may be of service in the advancement of Jewish Education.

“And above all, his general Jewish background, his knowledge of Hebrew, his character and personal dignity must be such as to earn for him the respect of his community.”

“THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CANTILLATIONS”

Excerpts of address delivered by

**PROF. SALOMO ROSOWSKY, Musicologist and Composer
Palestine Conservatory in Jerusalem**

“I must point out immediately that it is most unfortunate that the Cantillations of the Bible do not play a sufficiently important role in our Synagogue. There are several contributing factors for this prevailing condition. First, too little time in the service is allotted to the Torah reader. Second, many of the readers do not possess the necessary musical knowledge, nor are they sufficiently versed in Hebrew grammar, nor do they have a beautiful voice. Third, much too little time has been devoted to research and the scientific study of the cantillations . . .

“Just as the composer of Synagogue music gives the Cantor a prepared and complete composition, so, too, the Jewish musicologist must give the Torah reader a complete and correct chant.

“Is the Tanach music? Do the cantillations build a definite music system or is it a form of speech-song, more speech than song? Possibly it is rather declamation without any elements of song? To me it is clear, that a large part of the cantillations, if not all, which we possess, presents a complete music system that contains intervals, a variety of rhythms, rules that govern the single cantillation notes which build the musical phrases or recitatives of each sentence. The Torah reader who possesses such knowledge would adorn his part of the service with poetic aesthetic beauty. The music of the cantillations is original Jewish music and noble in every aspect.”

* * * * *

Following a brief discussion of some of the points raised in the papers read at the morning session, the conference adjourned for the Luncheon. Afternoon sessions were resumed at 2 :00 P.M.

"WHAT ARE THE MUSICAL NEEDS OF THE CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUE"?

A. Excerpts of addressee delivered by

DR. IRA EISENSTEIN, *Leader*

Society for the Advancement of Judaism, New York City

"... Most Conservative Synagogues are inclined to regard Judaism as the total experience of the Jewish people, and hence not confined merely to the act of worship. If that is the case, then the musical needs of such institutions are far greater than that of synagogue chanting or even congregational singing. The musical needs of a congregation extend to every age level and permeate every phase of Jewish living. The Synagogue, of course, is the obvious place to begin; and a congregation ought to have a cantor who can sing pleasantly, who can conduct a choir and sing with a choir, teach congregational singing, and lead in congregational singing . . .

"The congregation, therefore, requires a **Jewish musical personality**, an individual who is not necessarily a great genius as composer or conductor, but a practitioner of Jewish music in much the same way as the Rabbi is a general practitioner in the spiritual, religious and educational realm . . .

"The Jewish musical personality who is properly trained for his task has a rare opportunity to be of service to his people.; but he must be more **than cantor**, more than conductor or composer. He must be the bearer and the transmitter of the Jewish musical experience to the common man."

B. Excerpts of address delivered by

DR. ISADORE FREED, *Professor of Composition*

Hartt Musical Foundation, Hartford, Conn.

"... I approach the whole question of music in Jewish worship from a musician's specialized angle. Why does music play such a significant role in the liturgy of the synagogue and why has Jewish worship had musical ties for generation upon generation ? . . .

"We cannot think of music being made for the synagogue without thinking in terms of people. If music (and we mean 'people') is to contribute anything to the synagogue, what in turn should the synagogue contribute to music (again meaning 'people'.) . . .

"What the Conservative Synagogue needs, musically speaking, is what Judaism needs-an opportunity for the Jew to express himself in music in the place which should be his home . . .

"Yet the Conservative synagogue has been less aggressive, less far-sighted and less successful in its music program than the Reform synagogue. Where

the Reform synagogue can point to at least a dozen outstanding settings of the Union Prayer Book, all of them written during the last two decades, the conservative synagogue can point to hardly any of its own prayer books. If the accent in some congregations is in the direction of congregational singing, where is the music adequate to this function and whom has the Conservative synagogue commissioned to write it? This is by no means to be understood as implying that the Reform Synagogue has solved its musical problem. But there, at least, a good start has been made . . .

"A school where the Cantor and the synagogal musician may be trained is a first need. This will eliminate the present reliance on the church organist and church choristers who now serve as 'Shabbas Goyim' in the religious service. And finally the synagogue must create a dignified and respected place in society for those who are to function as synagogal musicians."

“WHERE AND HOW SHALL A CANTOR BE TRAINED?”

A. Excerpts of address by

RABBI ISRAEL GOLDFARB

Congregation Beth Israel Anshe Emes, Brooklyn, New York

(In Rabbi Goldfarb's absence, the address was read by Cantor Edgar Mills)

“It has long been felt by all who have a deep concern for the preservation and development of Jewish liturgical music in America that an institution for the training of Cantors in this Country is **of** vital importance.

“It is a regrettable fact that while American Jewry is blessed with any number of institutions of higher learning for the training of Rabbis and religious teachers to meet the demands of every type of Synagogue and religious school, there is not even one institution on the entire American continent for the training of the Hazzan, who, next to the Rabbi, is the most important functionary in the service of the Synagogue . . .

“That the effect of such untrained and irresponsible cantors on the religious service of the Synagogue is most damaging and demoralizing goes without saying. In place of a ‘Sh’liach Tsibbur’-who was always looked upon as an ambassador of the community, dignified, modest, well trained, and well versed in the sacred art of the Jewish traditional chant, we often find in the pulpit a would-be concert artist and star, who brings to the Altar of God strange fire and vulgarizes the service by the rendition of secular tunes which are foreign to the spirit of our prayers and to the atmosphere of the Synagogue . . .

“For the training of a Cantor, a special school must be established in this country, either under the auspices of any of the Jewish institutions of higher learning, ^{such} as the Jewish Theological Seminary, or as an independent institution.

“The establishment of such a school has long been on the agenda of the United Synagogue and the Jewish Theological Seminary.

“As far back as 1924, the United Synagogue of America, conscious of this pressing problem, adopted a

resolution at its convention, calling upon the Seminary to establish a school for Cantors. The late Dr. Cyrus Adler then asked the author of this paper to prepare a plan for the establishment of such a school. The plan was duly prepared and presented to the Seminary's Faculty for its approval and adoption.

“In short, the plan provided for a school to be established under the aegis of the Seminary with courses of study covering a period of four years.

“These courses were to be divided into four general groups : (1) Hebrew, (2) Secular, (3) General music and (4) Hazanuth.

- (1) The courses in Hebrew were to be provided by the Teachers' Institute of the Seminary.
- (2) The courses in secular subjects were to be obtained at the public High Schools and Colleges.
- (3) The general music courses were to be taken at the Juilliard School of Music, across the street from the Seminary, and
- (4) The courses in Hazanuth were to be given in the Seminary proper and

“The requirements for admission and graduation were worked out in detail as were the credits to be given for each course. The plan as a whole seemed practical and workable. Unfortunately it was the lack of funds which delayed the plan and prevented its execution.

“I believe that the time is now overripe for an attempt to solve this important problem. The impatience of leaders in the field of Jewish music and in Congregational life recently expressed itself in several disassociated movements looking toward the solution of the Cantor problem.” . . .

B. Excerpts of address by
CANTOR MAX WOHLBERG
Congregation Beth El, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

"... At an impressive meeting arranged by the Cantors' Association of New York (1904) in memory of the one hundredth birthday of Solomon Sulzer, one of the speakers, Dr. Isaac Moses, Rabbi of Temple Emanuel declared : 'Brethren, if you have your cause and the cause of Judaism at heart, you cannot more befittingly commemorate this centennial birthday of the great master (Sulzer) than by establishing an Institute for Cantors where young men of musical ability shall be trained in every branch that is requisite for a modern Cantor. I am sure you will receive hearty moral and financial support of many leaders of Israel, both of pulpit and pew. Such work will tend to preserve some of the strongest, the most vital, the most characteristic elements of Jewish worship' . . .

"As the first step in the cure of the above-mentioned ills, it seems to me that it would be wise to appoint a small Board consisting of Rabbis, Cantors and Composers whose task it would be to plan for the establishment of a School for Jewish music (under the auspices of the J.T.S.) devoted to the training of Hazanim . . .

"The School for Hazanim is to admit applicants whose character conforms to the highest moral and ethical standards of our religion. Applicants are to be High School graduates (College education should be required 4-5 **years** hence). They are to have the ability to translate passages of the Siddur, possess a pleasing voice, command facility in reading simple vocal music and have some familiarity with the piano.

"A three year course is recommended.

Subjects are to include:

- 1) a. Hebrew language 1st and 2nd year
- b. Jewish history 1st and 2nd year
- c. Jewish literature 2nd and 3rd year
- d. Dinei Tefilloh Umin-hagei Beis Hakneses 3rd year
- e. The development of the Prayer Book 1st and 2nd year
- f. Piyutim and Payetonim 3rd year

- 2) a. Nuschaoth Hatfilloh 1st year
- b. Cantillations (Ta'amim) 1st year
- c. Literature of Synagogue music 2nd and 3rd year
- d. History of Hazzanuth 2nd year
- e. History of Jewish music 2nd year
- f. Composers of the Synagogue 3rd year
- g. Folk songs
Palestinian songs
Art songs } 3rd year
- 3) a. Theory of music 1st year
- b. Harmony 1st and 2nd year
- c. Composition 3rd year
- d. Choir organization 3rd year
- e. Organ 2nd year
- f. Voice Training 1st, 2nd and 3rd year
- 4) a. Congregational singing
- b. The training of Bener Mitzvah
- c. Assembly singing (children) This entire group in 3rd year.
- d. Community singing (Adults)
- e. The place of the Cantor in the Congregation

"Group 1) may be taught at regular Seminary classes
 Group 3) may be taught at **any** reputable music school
 For groups 2) and 4) experienced Cantors and Jewish composers, the latter preferably to be acting Choir masters ought to be engaged.

"Upon the successful conclusion of this course the graduate is to receive a degree or diploma as Hazzan-Minister."

“THE CANTOR’S PLACE IN JEWISH MUSICAL RESEARCH”

Excerpts of address delivered by

**JOSEPH YASSER, *Musicologist and Author*
Chairman, Jewish Music Forum**

“Not very many years ago—perhaps no more than a quarter of a century or so—it used to be taken almost for granted that Jewish musical research represents a very circumscribed field of scholarly endeavor; also that it addresses itself virtually to a handful of people with rather limited or, as some would even say, ‘provincial’ interests . . .

“It is generally accepted that the highly creditable **work** of A. Z. Idelsohn represents a definite turning point in this direction. We all know, of course, that having been active at one time as a cantor, Idelsohn subsequently turned all his energies to Jewish musical research and, in fact, was the one who actually attracted the attention of Western scholars to the immense potentialities inherent in this particular field . . .

“It seems to me, for instance, that in the very urgent problems concerning the real nature and restoration of the ancient chant, the cantor’s inner experience and intuition may be of inestimable value in those doubtful cases, when the decisive judgment depends on imponderables that defy any objective measurement or a strictly logical argumentation. The same holds true also in the field of purely historical research, let us say, where a cantor may present at times a far ‘warmer’ and more sympathetic picture of certain events be-

cause of his first-hand acquaintance with the customs and mores of the people among whom he was brought up from childhood. Instances of this sort could be found, of course, in other branches of Jewish musical research as well . . .

“For this reason, I would like to see the planned curriculum in some future institution for cantors to contain, among other substantial subjects, a course of Jewish musicology that would be readily accessible to an average student and, at the same time, sufficiently inclusive for intelligent and serious work in the field of Jewish musical research . . .

“And last but not least, it will always remain for the cantor one of the noblest outlets for a meaningful life at the time of his professional retirement, when he will no longer be in a position to continue his musical ministrations at synagogue services. At this crucial point of his career, which every cantor must be prepared to face bravely in due time, he could hardly choose a more dignified occupation, or one more in keeping with the Jewish spiritual tradition, than that of tirelessly carrying on a scholarly work which **is** likely not only to fascinate himself, but may also turn out to be of importance to his community—perhaps even to the world at large.”

“THE CANTOR AS A LEADER IN JEWISH MUSICAL PROGRESS”

Excerpts of address delivered by

**MAX HELFMAN, *Music Director*,
Temple B’nai Abraham, Newark, New Jersey**

“... Is our synagogue music of today properly synchronized with our times? Do the routine, syrupy and ah-too-often trivial sounds that pervade so many of our temples and our synagogues really express this tragic and fateful moment of our people? . . .

“To my mind the synagogue has never been a place where the Jew sought to escape from life. On the contrary, life with all its agonies, troubles, joys, was always brought into the synagogue, there to be purified and spiritualized. Besides, the question is really not one

of the 'new music' versus the 'old'. The problem, as I see it, is the need for the continuing re-interpretation of the old in terms of the new. If life can be looked upon as some sort of cosmic Theme and Variations, I hold it necessary and obligatory for each generation to create its own variation on the fundamental theme. If we are to hand **over** the torch of our culture to the coming generations, we must first make sure that this torch is not dimmed. Each generation must add the fuel of its own creativity so that that torch may continue to flame brightly.

"We cannot continue exclusively to live on the interest of our past achievements. The progress of an art, as of life, cannot be halted by the vague cry of "tradition". Even assuming that we know the precise definition of this shibboleth, it is certainly true that a living tradition is a growing tradition, constantly added to and modified by changing environment . . .

"To help fill this vacuum-this, as I see it, is the task of the modern cantor in his role as a leader in Jewish musical progress. He must serve as a bridge between the creative artists and the people. Certainly it is a hard thing to serve as a bridge and carry the burden of such exalted traffic, but it is a noble and needful task. The cantor must cease to be regarded as some sort of talented hired help that merely follows instructions of Board and rabbi as to what to

sing and what not to sing, whether to make a 'dreidl' or not. Nor must he let himself be regarded as some sort of frustrated concert artist engaged to entertain his congregation with pleasant song, and keep them awake for the sermon. He must be regarded, and first of all he must learn so to regard himself-a-c a teacher and guide in the field of our music. To achieve this stature, he must, of course, continuously broaden his musical and cultural horizon. From Shestapol to Stravinsky, all important choral works should arouse sympathetic interest. He must make of his synagogue, not only a repository of the finest of our traditions, but a truly sacred laboratory.

"And, let him not be afraid that his congregation will not understand. If he presents these new works with confidence and devotion, they are bound, sooner or later, to be understood and perhaps eventually become, by the process of our artistic metabolism, part of our musical inheritance. But whether the congregation readily and immediately understands or not, of one thing I am quite certain! God will understand. God understands all artists, conservative or polytonal-all artists who seek sincerely and competently to express Him in sound. Not only will He understand these new works, but I am sure He will welcome them with all His loving kindness. For did he not inspire his psalmist to say, 'Shiru L'Adonai Shir Chaddash'? 'Sing unto the Lord a new song'?"

"TENURE AND ECONOMIC SECURITY OF THE CANTOR"

**A. Excerpts of address delivered by
ISRAEL B. OSEAS, Chairman, Ritual Committee,
Park Avenue Synagogue, New York City**

" . . . The problem of security for the Cantor is a complex one. The security of the Cantor is only one of the numerous problems of the Cantorate, which is only one element in the larger problem of the Synagogue, which is only one element in the much larger setting of the Jewish community, and this is only a part of the American Social and Economic scene.

"The Cantorate is a ministry. That is not to say that it is now in all cases a ministry, that all Cantors regard themselves a part of so high a calling or that they are so regarded **by** their congregations. But it is the Cantor as a minister of religion that I am inter-

ested in, and that I am discussing. The Cantor, of course, is other and lesser things. He is a singer who sings in a Synagogue; he is a choir-leader; he is a musician skilled in special techniques ; a leader of religious services ; a teacher; a man learned in Hebrew and in the ritual of ceremonial observances; a leader in worship. He is the master of a craft, an art and a profession. But unless he achieves not only a mastery of all of these, but is also a minister of God, he has fallen short of his true statue, and if I am to deal with a Cantor who is something else and less, I should want to reconsider what I have to say here.

"If the Cantor is a minister, then certain postulates flow immediately from that concept. He is a dedicated person, one engaged in a holy vocation. He has given up the acquisition of wealth as an end in his life . . .

"**And** just as we will not expect of a minister that he shall abandon the Synagogue for the Concert Stage, so we will not expect him to abandon his ministry with those who need him for a merely higher salary in another locale though that locale be still a synagogue . . .

"What are the basic elements of such a reward ? I think they can be reduced to two. One is the respect of the community which is the due of all those who follow a high calling. The second is a remuneration sufficient to provide at least the decencies of life . . .

"I think we may take it for granted that the scale of compensation with rare exceptions will continue for the foreseeable future to be at the lower end of the

range of adequacy, **To** this I suspect that all who enter a ministry are reconciled. No one expects to become rich by being a Cantor . . .

"One who has entered a ministry has renounced the high adventure of searching for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. But if his road will not end at a pot of gold neither should it end in a morass. He should not have the risks of the search with none of the rewards of success. He should know that his sacrifice will lead to something better than the dubious generosity of his parishioners. He should have a measure of modest security to free his mind and his talents for his chosen profession. And this security should be his as of right and not of favor. The decencies of life, in other words, include provision for all of his life.

"Given such minimum security we may hope to attract to this ministry young men of worth. Without it, we can never have an adequate cantorate."

* * * * *

B. Excerpts of address delivered by

LAWRENCE M. HELFGOTT, *Executive Secretary* Joint Retirement Board

"During the past year, I have visited with a number of Conservative congregations, speaking to them and answering their questions with respect to the retirement and insurance plan for members of the Rabbinical Assembly. A number of the congregations had inquired as to the availability of a similar plan for their cantors, sextons and the members of their teaching staffs. In several instances, the congregations are ready to come into such a plan.

"The retirement and insurance plan for the members of the Rabbinical Assembly contemplates the payment of a premium of 11% of the Rabbi's salary, of which 7/11 is paid by the congregation and the remainder by the Rabbi. This premium is used to buy, at group rates, a retirement income policy. Such a policy would produce for a Rabbi, age 40, and earning \$5,000 (premium \$550) approximately \$10,000 of life insurance initially, and a monthly annuity of \$100 for life (guaranteed for ten years). The amount of life insurance grows until it reaches approximately \$16,000, at age 65. All of the values mentioned are increased by the dividends as they are received.

"I must say to you that the institution of such a plan for the members of the Cantorate, while a big step forward, is by no means a solution of the problem. Among the factors to be considered is that the suggested premium rate of 11% of salary would, in many cases, produce an inadequate retirement income. Further, I have been very much concerned by the fact that the normal retirement age of 65 is somewhat too old in the case of the Cantors. To set an earlier retirement date would either reduce the benefits to be received, or increase the cost substantially.

"I should, however, like very much to see a retirement and insurance plan for the Cantors come into being. The United Synagogue of America has gone on record as being ready to sponsor such a plan as soon as the 50 members required are enrolled. For my part, I am prepared to meet with you and your respective congregations to answer any questions you may have and to assist in the formulation and adoption of the plan."

* * *

Discussion based upon the papers presented at each of the sessions was engaged in. A variety of **opinions** were expressed, both favorable and opposed to the idea of the establishment of a school for chazanim to be associated with the Jewish Theological Seminary as well as the need for the creation of a Cantors' Assembly, under the sponsorship of the United Synagogue of America.

The session adjourned at 6:15 P.M. for dinner.

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During dinner, Rabbi Israel Jr. Goldman, President of the Rabbinical Assembly of America, greeted the delegates and guests, and wished them every conceivable success in their endeavors, and pledged the whole-hearted cooperation of the members of the Rabbinical Assembly.

Resolutions

Earlier in the day, three committees had been appointed to consider the basic issues presented at the Conference and presented the following resolutions.

I. Organization of a Cantors Assembly of America

The Committee to consider the question of the need for organizing a Cantors' Assembly of America, presented the following resolution :

"WHEREAS it is the opinion of this Conference on Jewish Music in the Synagogue, held on Wednesday, February 26, 1947, under the auspices of the Department of Music of the United Synagogue of America, at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, that a Cantors' Assembly of America be organized, and :

"WHEREAS such an Assembly will serve to unite all of the cantors who serve in Conservative synagogues and in order to conserve as well as to promote the best of our traditional musical heritage, to encourage musical creativity and to cooperate with the United Synagogue of America, the **Jewish** Theological Seminary of America and the Rabbinical Assembly of America and with all of the existing cantors' organizations to advance the cause of the Jewish music, to promote the welfare of its members and to foster the spirit of fellowship and cooperation among its members ; be it therefore

'RESOLVED that a committee of cantors be formed to plan and organize the Cantors' Assembly of America under the auspices of the United Synagogue of America."

II. Standards and Qualifications for the Cantor

The Committee on Standards and Qualifications for the Cantor, presented the following resolution :

"WHEREAS it is the consensus of this Conference held on Wednesday, February 26th. 1947, at the Jew-

ish Theological Seminary of America, 3080 Broadway, New York City, that standards and qualifications for the Cantor be established; and

"WHEREAS a set of standards and qualifications for the Cantor will reflect the noblest ethics of the profession with reverence and dignity; and

"WHEREAS this conference recommends that a "Certificate of Merit" shall **be** issued to those cantors who will comply with all of the standards and qualifications; **be** it therefore

"RESOLVED that a Committee on Standards and Qualifications for the Cantor be appointed, whose function it shall be to institute and adopt criteria of standards for the Cantor."

III. Establishment of a Cantors' Seminary in the Jewish Theological Seminary

The committee to consider the establishing of a Cantors' Seminary in the Jewish Theological Seminary, resolved as follows :

"WHEREAS it is the opinion of this conference held Wednesday, February 26, 1947 at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 3080 Broadway, New York City, that the need for a Seminary for Cantors is imminent; and

"WHEREAS an established Seminary for Cantors graduating qualified students with accredited degrees and titles will help to give status and greater recognition to the profession, and

"WHEREAS by virtue of its charter the Jewish Theological Seminary of America since its inception, is authorized to confer the title Hazan thereby confirming and corroborating the fact that its founders anticipated establishing a Department of Hazanut ; and

"WHEREAS a school for Cantors is included in the Seminary's program of the proposed University of Judaism ; and

"WHEREAS a Cantor who graduates from the Gntors' Seminary will by virtue of his training be more adequately qualified to serve the needs of the Synagogue and 'to participate more fully in the Synagogue program; and

"WHEREAS existing conditions are such that there are many more congregations seeking the services of qualified Cantors than there are available applicants to fill these positions, a condition which is becoming progressively worse, be it therefore

"RESOLVED that a committee of Rabbis, Cantors, musicians and lay persons be formed to use every conceivable means at its disposal to expedite the establishment of a Seminary for Cantors in the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and to offer its support towards its realization."

These resolutions were adopted unanimously at the Business Session following the dinner, held at the

Jewish Theological Seminary on Wednesday, February 26th, 1947.

* * *

A concert of Synagogue Music, sponsored by the Department of Music of the United Synagogue of America, took place in the Concert Hall of the Juilliard School of Music following the sessions. This concert was attended by a capacity audience of 1,000. Synagogue music, varying in type from the traditional to modern, was presented by:

The Synagogue Choir, Oscar Julius, Director

Cant or Adolph Katchko

A group of the Vinaver Singers, Chemjo Vinaver, Director

Cantor Savel Kwartin

Cantor Berle Chagy

A group of the Hebrew Arts Singers, Max Helfman, Director.

*The following Cantors were present :

Martin Adolf
Morris Ail
Emanuel Barkan
Jacob Barkin
S. Bashkowitz
Jacob Bernard
Charles B. Bloch
Wm. Bogzester-Best
Harry Borenstein
Mario Botashansky
Leib Braun
Israel Breitbart
William Ceaser
S. A. Cody
Milton Cooper
Henry Ehrenberg
Gershon Ephros
Moshe Erstling
Joseph Feuer
R. Fingerth
I. Freeman
Cantor Gartenhaus
Fred S. Gartner
Cantor Gerlich
Myro Glass
David Glincofsky
Asher Goldenberg
William Glueck
Eugene Goldberger
Harry Goldstein
Ernest Gottesman
Charles S. Gudowitz

Paterson, N. J.
Portland, Ore.
Brookline, Mass.
Washington, D. C.
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Yonkers, N. Y.
Brooklyn, N. Y.
New York City
Philadelphia, Penna.
Bronx, N. Y.
Bronx, N. Y.
Philadelphia, Penna.
Philadelphia, Penna.
Hempstead, L. I.
Brooklyn, N. Y.
New York City
Perth Amboy, N. J.
New York City
Far Rockaway, L. I.
New York City
Portland, Ore.
Newark, N. J.
Woodside, L. I.
Fall River, Mass.
Indianapolis, Ind.
Philadelphia, Penna.
New York City
Akron, Ohio
Montreal, Canada
Astoria, L. I.
Youngstown, Ohio
Buffalo, N. Y.

Herbert H. Harris
Mordecai G. Heiser
Gabriel Hochberg
Jacob Hohenemser
Abraham Hyman
Michael Icahn
Pinchos Jassinowsky
Hirsh Kahan
Simon Kandler
Adolph Katchko
Samuel Kligfeld
Simon E. Kriegsman
Philip Krohn
Reuben Krutoy
David Kurlan
Josef S. Lengyel
Cantor Levin
Cantor Lipp
Hillel Lipsicas
Michael Magidson
Joseph Mann
Bernard Matlin
Nathan Mendelson
Edgar Mills
Moshe Nathanson
Paul Niederland
Ben Nosowsky
Morris I. Okun
M. S. Oppenheim
Sigfried Philip
Joseph Posner
s. Postolow
David J. Putterman
Abraham Reisman

Philadelphia, Penna.
Pittsburgh, Penna.
Newton Centre, Mass.
Providence, R. I.
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Cedarhurst, L. I.
New York City
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Cambridge, Mass.
New York City
Tuckahoe, N. Y.
Philadelphia, Penna.
New York City
Freeport, L. I.
New York City
Richmond Hill, L. I.
Philadelphia, Penna.
Bedford, Mass.
Baltimore, Md.
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Philadelphia, Penna.
Reading, Penna.
Westmcunt, Que., Canada
Newark, N. J.
New York City
Utica, N. Y.
St. Paul, Minn.
Richmond, Va.
Bronx, N. Y.
New York City
Paterson, N. J.
Brooklyn, N. Y.
New York City
Harrisburg, Penna.

Irving Ringel	New York City	Cantor Shanok	New York City
William Robyn	White Plains, N. Y.	Samuel Shapiro	Bayonne, N. J.
Cantor Rogoff	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Gedallia Sheinfeld	Philadelphia, Penna.
A. J. Rose	Jamaica, L. I.	Rubin Sherer	Allentown, Penna.
Emil Rosen	Cincinnati, Ohio	Moses J. Silverman	Chicago, Ill.
Louis Rosen	New Britain, Conn.	Hyman Siskin	Brockton, Mass.
Samuel Rosenbaum	Rochester, N. Y.	Jacob Sivowitch	Waterbury, Conn.
Jacob Rothblatt	Kansas City, Mo.	Jacob H. Sonenklar	Detroit, Mich.
Moshe Rudinoff	New York City	Charles Sudock	New Haven, Conn.
Israel Sack	Philadelphia, Penna.	I. Wall	Philadelphia, Penna.
William Sauler	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Irving Weinberger	Rochester, N. Y.
Boris Schiffman	New York City	Adolph J. Weisgal	Baltimore, Md.
Henry A. Schraeder	New York City	J. S. Weisser	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Jacob Schwartz	New York City	S. Winter	Philadelphia, Penna.
Max Schwarzmman	Bronx, N. Y.	Max Wohlberg	Philadelphia, Penna.
Raphael Seligman	New York City	Mordecai Yardeini	Bronx, N. Y.
Samuel H. Setzer	Brooklyn, N. Y.	David Ziegler	Bronx, N. Y.

“OTHER PERSONS ATTENDING WERE :

Joseph E. Adler	New York City	B. Morgenstern	New York City
Dr. Max Arzt	New York City	Leo H. Ornstein	New York City
Naomi Berman	New York City	Bernard Paroly	Bronx, N. Y.
Prof. S. Braslavsky	Roxbury, Mass.	Egon Pessen	McKeesport, Penna.
Arthur H. Budner	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Dr. S. Pimsleur	Mt. Vernon, N. Y.
Rabbi D. Jessurun Cardozo	Philadelphia, Penna.	Prof. K. S. Pinson	New York City
Harry Cohen	Detroit, Mich.	Mrs. K. S. Pinson	New York City
Rabbi Jack J. Cohen	New York City	M. A. Pomeranz	Mt. Vernon, N. Y.
Jos. D. Conway	Cleveland, Ohio	Rabbi Samuel Price	Springfield, Mass.
Rabbi Dubin	Flushing, L. I.	Rabbi Stanley Rabinowitz	New Haven, Conn.
Arthur Einstein	Providence, R. I.	Louis Rosensweig	Bronx, N. Y.
Dr. Ira Eisenstein	New York City	Mrs. Evelyn Roskin	Indianapolis, Ind.
Mrs. Gershon Ephros	Perth Amboy, N. J.	Prof. Rosowsky	Jerusalem, Palestine
Ben Epstein	Cleveland, Ohio	Samuel Rothstein	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Jacob Erkes	Reading, Penna.	Mrs. Rubinstein	Jackson Heights, Ill.
Dr. Louis Finkelstein	New York City	Abraham Salkowitz	Great Neck, L. I.
Isadore Freed	New York City	David Sapiro	New York City
Joseph Freudenthal	New York City	Heinrich Schalit	Providence, R. I.
Lee Furman	Mt. Vernon, N. Y.	Samuel Seidelman	Norfolk, Va.
Rabbi Albert I. Gordon	New York City	Rabbi Samuel M. Sherman	Newton Centre, Mass.
Mrs. Ernest Gottesman	Youngstown, Ohio	Rabbi Julius Silberfeld	Newark, N. J.
Mr. Grossman	New York City	Sol Silver	Wilkes-Barre, Penna.
Cyrus B. Hailperin	Pittsburgh, Penna.	Dr. Elias L. Solomon	New York City
Lawrence M. Helfgott	New York City	Rabbi Leon Spitz	New Haven, Conn.
Max Helfman	Newark, N. J.	Mr. Swet	Jerusalem, Palestine
Henry Julius	New York City	Rabbi Saul Teplitz	Laurelton, L. I.
Oscar Julius	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Rabbi Isaac N. Trainin	New York City
Rabbi Harold Kamsler	Norristown, Penna.	Chemjo Vinaver	New York City
Rabbi Reuben M. Katz	Akron, Ohio	Harry Waldman	Bronx, N. Y.
Mr. Kosakoff	New York City	Jesse Walker	New York City
Mrs. L. Kavey	Port Chester, N. Y.	Dr. Jacob Weinberg	New York City
Leo Lange	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Joseph Yasser	New York City
Daniel Lawrence	New York City	Mr. Herman Zalis	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Dr. Emil Lehman	Asbury Park, N. J.		
Manfred Malsch	Jackson Heights, L. I.		
Eric Mandell	Philadelphia, Penna.		
Rabbi Bernard Mandelbaum	New York City		
Rabbi Morris D. Margolis	London, Ont., Canada		

*Listing incomplete. The names of many who attended do not appear on this listing due to the fact that they failed to register.

The Cantor's Assembly of the United Synagogue of America was officially organized on April 1, 1947 with the following temporary officers:

ABRAHAM J. ROSE	<i>President</i>
MARTIN ADOLF.	<i>Vice-President</i>
GERSHON EPHROS	Treasurer
MORRIS SHORE.....	Recording Secretary
DAVID J. PUTTERMAN.	<i>Corresponding Secretary</i>

The National Council and the Executive Council are in the process of formation.